

Meeting Minutes
Early Childhood Advisory Council
September 19, 2013

Call to Order

The meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council was called to order at 10:07am on September 19, 2013, at the building of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority in Frankfort, KY.

Roll Call

The following members were present: Tom Buford, Jane Chandler, Jennifer Godbey for Marilyn Coffey, Paula Goff, Tracy Haddix, Beth Jurek for Audrey Haynes, Cindy Heine, Tommy Floyd for Terry Holliday, Amy Hood Hooten, Chair Rick Hulefeld, LaQuandra Nesbitt, Kevin Nix, Brigitte Ramsey, Joe Roberts, Bill Scott, Ruth Ann Shepherd, June Widman and Tom Zawacki. The following members were not present: Julie Ashmun, Tom Burch, Ben Cundiff, Marybeth Jackson, Nicki Patton Rowe and Anna Shepherd.

Introduction of New Members.....

Chair Rick Hulefeld welcomed new member Kevin Nix and Secretary Thomas Zawacki, Tommy Floyd and Senator Buford in their new roles as ECAC Members. He also welcomed reappointed members Paula Goff, Amy Hood Hooten and Nicki Patton Rowe.

Approval of the June 2013 Minutes

On motion of Brigitte Ramsey, second by Tracy Haddix, the minutes of the June ECAC were approved as presented.

Strengthening Families Overview

Dr. Ruth Ann Shepherd presented an overview of the Strengthening Families Framework. Dr. Shepherd reminded the ECAC of their work to create a common definition for kindergarten readiness and to implement a common kindergarten screener. The work of strengthening families is the logical next step, giving Kentucky a common language to discuss the importance of strong families in helping children become kindergarten ready. It is Kentucky's goal that all families will not only understand, but have the skills to address, their children's needs. Strengthening Families is a model based on enhancing strengths that already exist in families to ensure that families can deal with stressors by building five key protective factors. Dr. Shepherd presented research about the effects of different types of stress on the brain. Much of the research she presented was based upon Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). However, the availability of a caring and responsive adult helps to mediate the effects of chronic stress and ACEs on a child. There was much discussion amongst the ECAC members after the presentation. The STARS workgroup intends to include the Strengthening Families protective factors in the new, hybrid TQRIS. Strengthening Families will be included as part of Kentucky's Race to the Top Proposal for 2013.

RTT- District Challenge Plan.....

Leon Mooneyhan, the CEO of the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC) brought staff to present on their Race to the Top District Grant. Out of 16 districts/groups that won the district level grant, OVEC/GRREC was the

only fully funded grant. Janet Hurt presented on Kid-Friendly, which is how the group refers to their grant proposal. The group won an extra \$1 Million to work on specific early childhood programs. The Kid-Friendly proposal includes working with non-publicly-funded preschools, both licensed and non-licensed, to build relationships in the community with the local school systems. Hopefully this relationship building is intended to lead to better training, more resources and in the end, a higher rate of children who are ready for Kindergarten. Brigitte Ramsey encouraged the group with meeting with Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics and Western Kentucky University to ensure that their definition of Kindergarten Readiness reflected that reported by the Early Childhood Data Profile.

Current Status of the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Budget

Beth Jurek reported on behalf of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services on the status of the cuts to the Child Care Assistance Program. April 1, the Cabinet stopped receiving new applications. July 1, upon review, individuals would qualify at 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) versus the prior 150%FPL measurement. At this time, the Cabinet has effectively spent \$4.8 Million less than the same 3 month period as last year. The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) is on track to fully support child care in FY14. Beth reminded the ECAC that priority populations were not affected by these changes, which include: individuals receiving Tax Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) who also receive CCAP, children under a protection plan, special needs children and teen parents. June Widman spoke about how the changes to CCAP funds have affected her region, pointing out that the rate of closures and new licenses do not tell the whole story, rather a reduction in slots has also affected child care in eastern Kentucky. There is also a loss of infant/toddler child care across Kentucky, because this is the most expensive child care slot, and the better child care centers are impacted because they also cost more to run. Several key players were tasked with gathering statistics and stories surrounding the CCAP cuts, increased demand on public preschool, and Head Start sequestration.

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge and Executive Director's Report.....

Terry Tolan reported on Kentucky's plan for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge 2013. There are five sections and five priorities. Kentucky has strengths and weaknesses in all areas. The TQRIS is the most difficult and will also cost the most money. All Secretaries and the Governor have put their full support behind Kentucky's basic plan outline. There is a small steering committee that has been meeting about Race to the Top, along with a few other smaller work groups with subject matter expertise. The Bi-Annual Report, which all ECAC members received, will be the outline for Section A. Terry reminded the ECAC that the work of the Race to the Top 2011 Proposal still proceeded, even without grant funds. Terry asked for Letters of Support from ECAC Members, due October 4. An Executive Summary will be sent to ECAC Members for review. The grant is due October 16, 2013.

Conclusion and Adjourn

Rick Hulefeld commented on how different the RTT-ELC application would be for this round. The next ECAC December 19, 2013 from 10am to Noon. Location to be announced. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm.